

Mayor's Report
Saturday, May 23, 2015
Deborah G. Owens

At the May 19, 2015, City Commission Meeting a Resolution was approved that will replace more than 2,600 feet of railing along the Battle Creek River between Capital Avenue NE and West Michigan Avenue. The project amount approved is \$232,117 and will also include repairing concrete walls, refurbishing the seating along the river and painting poles and arches. This project will beautify the riverfront and replace rails that are approximately 25 years old. We urge citizens to use caution while this project is under way.

Here is an opportunity for you! The City is hosting a rain barrel online sale to encourage residents to try this avenue of collecting and conserving water. These barrels can be purchased by visiting upcycle-products.com/static.asp?path=7955. Mail-in orders must be purchased by June 12 and online by June 15. Rain barrels will be available for pickup from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 20 at the City's Department of Public Works, located at 150 S. Kendall St. The cost of the rain barrels is \$56.50. It is important to recognize that lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40% of total household water used during the summer. Rain barrels collect water and store it until you need to use it. Saving water this way helps protect the environment, saves money and diverts water away from storm drains, decreasing the impact of runoff to local streams. For more information check out www.bcwater.org.

Festival Market Square is complete, and what a beauty it is! Friday, May 15, prior to the Spring into the Arts, a ribbon-cutting was held by the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, which officially opened this new facility at the corner of Jackson and McCamly in downtown Battle Creek. It has already exhibited success by many participating in the Farmer's Market, offering an incredible variety of homegrown produce and great food by various food vendors. The ability to enjoy downtown at the market certainly falls into the placemaking strategies we as a City are implementing. Additionally, a public Wi-Fi connection will be available to those visiting this newly-designed square and will be fast enough for those who want to enjoy the space while working. For those with social media accounts – including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn – the Wi-Fi connection will allow users to log in with one of those accounts, holding that login information for a month before requiring it again. Many events will take place at this location including Movies in the Park, with the first one the evening following this year's Cereal Festival on June 13. The first Movie will be the "Lego Movie."

Tuesday, May 19 was a day the City of Battle Creek recognized and remembered the sacrifices of members of law enforcement. We held our annual Police Memorial and Awards Ceremony in the City Commission Chambers, where every seat was filled and the room lined with Battle Creek Police officers. It was a day we remembered the life of Detective LaVern Brann, who was killed 10 years ago on May 9, 2005, while he and Detective Greg Huggett investigated a homicide. It was a solemn reminder of what law enforcement does on a daily basis to protect and serve. It is not just anyone who can be a law enforcement officer. It is not just a job; it is a mission; it is a way of life. We owe a great deal of gratitude to these individuals who would sacrifice their lives for ours at any given time.

Also during the event, State Sen. Mike Nofs indicated that he had introduced legislation that was passed and signed by Gov. Rick Snyder, which designates the I-94 Business Loop as the "LaVern S. Brann Memorial Highway." A replica of the sign was presented to Melanie Brann and Greg Huggett.

During this event, many officers received recognition, including 169 unit citations, 32 awards for professional excellence, 14 meritorious awards, 24 letters of commendations and two lifesaving awards. These awards were followed by the presentation of the Officer of the Year, Todd Rathjen, a very humble man who recognized his fellow officers stating that the "Officer of the Year is really Officerss of the Year," speaking to the importance and dedication of all.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mayor

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